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Special Collections/ Mississippi Valley Collection

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The University of Memphis, a Tennessee Board of Regents institution, is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action University. It is committed to education of a non-racially identifiable student body.

University Libraries

Special Collections/MVC

The Special Collections Department is the rare book and manuscript repository for the University Libraries. The largest subunit of the Special Collections Department is the Mississippi Valley Collection (MVC), which consists of printed and manuscript materials, maps, photographs, oral history tapes and transcripts, and other formats documenting the history and culture of the lower Mississippi River valley.

In addition to University students, faculty and staff, those who use the materials in Special/MVC include print and video journalists, researchers, scholars, and private persons from around the world, who have interests in such areas as:

- The history and culture of the South, the lower Mississippi River valley, the Mid-South region, and Tennessee
- The American Civil War
- African-American History

Topical areas of collection include, but are not limited to:

- American popular entertainment, especially 19th and early 20th century circuses
- American and British theater in the 19th and early 20th centuries
- The Civil Rights struggle in America
- The experiences of Mid-Southerners in the World Wars
- The history of the University of Memphis



The holdings of Special/MVC include:

- Over 500 separate manuscript collections (family and personal papers; business and organizational records)
- Nearly 1000 mostly original American and European maps of the region from the 18th to the 20th centuries
- Over 500,000 photographs, c. 1900-1980 (mostly original prints from the photo morgue files of the major Memphis daily papers)
- Some 60,000 books, including the archival set of theses and dissertations done at the UofM, as well as collections focused on the fields of public administration and Romantic and Victorian literature.

The **Curator of Special Collections** is available to make presentations on various topics in regional history for civic, heritage, and historical groups. Special/MVC is located on the west side of the fourth floor of the Ned R. McWherter Library.

Normal Hours (during semesters*)

Sunday. 1-5:00 p.m.
Mon & Thurs 8 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Tues, Wed, & Fri. 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

* Between semesters, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday.

Curator: Ed Frank
Phone: 901-678-2210
Fax: 901-678-8218
Email: efrank@memphis.edu
University Libraries Home Page:
<http://exlibris.memphis.edu/>